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*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 06TELAVIV3433, OLMERT AND LIVNI TO CODEL LANTOS: CONTROLLING

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### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06TELAVIV3433**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">06TELAVIV3433</a>	<a href="#">2006-08-28 16:01</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Tel Aviv</a>

Appears in these articles:

[not](#)  
[yet](#)  
[set](#)

null  
Leza L Olson 08/29/2006 09:54:42 AM From DB/Inbox: Leza L Olson

Cable  
Text:

C O N F I D E N T I A L

TEL AVIV 03433

SIPDIS  
CXTela:

ACTION: POL  
INFO: AMB AID ADM RSO IPSC PD IMO RES CONS ECON DCM  
DAO

DISSEMINATION: POL  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:JONES  
DRAFTED: EXEC:SISKAL  
CLEARED: NONE

VZCZCTVI222  
OO RUEHC RUEHXX

DE RUEHTV #3433/01 2401601  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 281601Z AUG 06  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5955  
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 003433

SIPDIS

CODEL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/28/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [LE](#) [IS](#) [PHUM](#) [UN](#)  
SUBJECT: OLMERT AND LIVNI TO CODEL LANTOS: CONTROLLING  
LEBANESE/SYRIAN BORDER "MOST CRUCIAL"

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In brief, separate meetings August 27, Prime Minister Olmert and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni told the Ambassador and CODEL Lantos that controlling the border between Lebanon and Syria was the "most crucial" issue for proper implementation of UNSCR 1701. Congressman Lantos informed Olmert that he had put an informal hold on the USG's Lebanese assistance package pending his return to Washington. Olmert and Livni also stressed the importance of the safe return of the Israeli soldiers, with both saying that now is the time for the Government of Lebanon to take the soldiers into custody from Hizballah. On enforcement of the arms embargo, Livni expressed concern that the GOL appeared to be hesitating in making its request to UNIFIL for assistance. End Summary.

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Lantos Puts Informal Hold on Lebanese Assistance Package  
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¶2. (C) In a twenty-minute meeting, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told visiting Member of Congress Tom Lantos on Sunday August 27 that controlling the border between Lebanon and Syria was the "most crucial" issue for proper implementation of UNSC Resolution 1701. In Olmert's view, technical means alone would not be sufficient to accomplish this objective; it would require the stationing of UNIFIL troops along the border. Olmert and Lantos agreed that for the Government of Lebanon to agree to this would require outside pressure.

¶3. (C) Lantos informed Olmert that during his meetings with Lebanese officials the previous day, he had told them that Congress is a co-equal branch of government and that it would have to agree to Administration proposals for assistance to Lebanon before they would become reality. Although he considers himself a good friend of Lebanon, Lantos said, he had put an informal hold on the Lebanese assistance package pending his return from the region. Olmert welcomed this news and argued that international assistance for Lebanon in general should be tied to full implementation of UNSCR 1701, especially enforcement of the arms embargo by controlling the border with Syria.

NB: After the meeting, Olmert told the Ambassador that he had made a similar point to Secretary Rice during a recent conversation on the possibility of Israel's relaxing its air blockade of Lebanon. He added that Israel would not agree to arms deliveries for the Lebanese Armed Forces until the GOL had made the necessary request to UNIFIL for assistance in policing its borders.

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OLMERT: LANTOS SHOULD TAKE CONTROL OF THE SOLDIERS NOW  
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¶4. (C) In a discussion of the two IDF soldiers held captive by Hizballah, Olmert told Lantos that he believed that the time had come for the government of Lebanon to take control of the soldiers from Hizballah. Once Israel knew that they

were in official Lebanese custody and would be kept safe, it would be possible for the GOI to enter into negotiations for their release. Olmert also said that he liked Lebanese PM Fuad Siniora and would be happy to meet with him anytime. However, he understood that the weakness of Siniora,s government precluded that. "Trust me," he said, "I know all about weakness (in government); I wish that some of those who are always asking me to help strengthen (PA President Mahmoud) Abbas or Siniora would recognize how weak I am." Lantos sympathized with Olmert,s situation and confided that he planned to help organize an initiative to raise private funds in the United States for the reconstruction of northern Israel. He also mentioned his intentions to introduce legislation for humanitarian assistance to Israeli victims of Hizballah rocket attacks. Olmert noted that over 40 percent of Israeli civilians (18 of 42) killed by rocket attacks were of Arab origin. He also stressed the irony of Hizballah SYG Nasrallah,s call to the Arab citizens of Haifa to flee the city during the conflict. "That,s exactly what they (Arab leaders) did during the war of independence," he said. "They,re the ones who created the refugee problem that causes us so many problems."

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LIVNI REINFORCES OLMERT,S MESSAGE ON UNSCR 1701 AND CUSTODY  
OF THE SOLDIERS  
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15. (C) In a subsequent, equally brief meeting with Foreign Minister Livni, implementation of UNSCR 1701 and the Israeli captives also dominated the discussion. Livni told Lantos that she would be leaving for Germany later in the day to press for "quick, complete implementation" of 1701. Calling the captured soldiers the "most sensitive" issue for Israeli society, she also informed Lantos that the GOI was now trying to press the GOL to take them into its custody. Comment: Livni,s reference to this effort in the context of her trip to Germany could indicate that the GOI will seek German mediation on the prisoners, as it has done in previous cases.

16. (C) Turning to enforcement of the arms embargo, Livni expressed concern that the GOL appeared to be hesitating in making its request to UNIFIL for assistance. It was not clear to her what the GOL would require before making the request. She knew that they had already been discussing the matter with the Germans, however, and perhaps with a little bit of pressure it might be possible to get them to make the request. Lantos observed that PM Siniora was weak and no doubt feared a negative Syrian reaction. Livni agreed that Syria,s attitude was an obstacle. However, she said that in recent discussions with Italian leaders they said that they had detected a steady softening in Syria,s position. Initially, the Syrians had tried to pressure prospective troop contributors not to join UNIFIL at all. Then they had threatened to close the border with Lebanon if UNIFIL deployed there. Now, they were professing their intention to honor the embargo. In this environment, she thought that some external pressure might help Siniora to do the right thing. She closed the discussion by observing that she knew that Siniora is weak, and adding, "so are we; it,s impossible for us to make gestures (to him) right now, but there are some things he could do to improve the situation."

17. (C) COMMENT: Representative Lantos provided some external pressure of his own on Siniora in statements made to the press prior to the meeting with Livni. Lantos called for the USD 230 million in assistance to Lebanon announced by the President to be conditioned on troop deployments along the Lebanese/Syrian border. It was time he said for the GOL to "show some backbone." He also recounted that he had tried in vain in the past to condition U.S. aid to Lebanon to deployment of the LAF to the border with Israel. He argued that had then Secretary Powell accepted his proposal, more than one thousand lives and several billions of dollars would have been saved. For her part, FM Livni told the press that UNSCR 1701 gives Israel and Lebanon a chance to transform the situation for the better. However, it must be implemented properly, including its arms embargo and its call for the

return of Israel,s prisoners.

18. (U): Representative Lantos did not see this message prior to his departure from post.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv>

You can also access this site through the State Department's  
Classified SIPRNET website.

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JONES